

Ambassador Dawn M. Liberi
Remarks following credentials presentation
January 18, 2013

Good Morning. I have just met with President Nkurunziza to present my credentials and bring him best wishes from President Obama and the American people.

I was very honored when President Obama asked me to represent him and the United States as the next Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi. The United States has maintained a continuous official presence in Burundi since establishing diplomatic relations here 50 years ago.

I look forward to working with the government of Burundi, civil society, the private sector and individuals to build on our past success to achieve even closer collaboration. Ours is a partnership based on shared democratic values and our mutual interest in promoting peace, security and prosperity here and in the region.

The United States is committed to a strong bilateral relationship, as shown by our programs to improve the health of Burundians, our support of Burundi's efforts to stimulate economic growth, and our defense cooperation. Our new Embassy building in Kigobe symbolizes that enduring relationship.

Although this is my time living in Burundi, it is not my first experience in Africa. In fact I have served in five African posts with USAID over a span of twenty years, including Nigeria, Uganda, Ghana, Senegal and Niger. I am very familiar with the kind of development issues Burundi faces but recognize that the challenges in each country are distinct and am eager to learn more and meet with Burundians throughout the country.

I look forward to meeting you and learning more about your rich culture as we work together on mutual goals.